



primavera

– SELECTIONS –



LOCALITY: Bornato,
Franciacorta

WINEMAKER: Joska
Biondelli

biondelli.com



CANTINE BIONDELLI FRANCIACORTA

Situated in the region of Lombardy in north-central Italy, the DOCG of Franciacorta produces, by popular consensus, the country's finest sparkling wine. I'm privileged to have in my portfolio the Franciacorta of Biondelli, a very small family estate that is regarded as one of the leading winemakers of this DOCG, crafting a world-class product that can match it with the best of Europe and beyond. Often compared with Champagne, as a category, Franciacorta produces around five per cent of the volume that Champagne does each year – a fraction of its size!

Franciacorta lies in the rolling hills south of Lake Iseo, in the province of Brescia. The Biondelli family estate is situated near the village of Bornato, and close by the historic medieval castle of the same name. Here, in a beautifully restored and redeveloped 16th century farmhouse, the Biondelli family have their winemaking facility, complete with an impressive, purpose-built underground cellar. Carlottavio Biondelli, his wife Mariella and sons Francesco and Joska operate the business as a passionately run family affair. Joska has juggled a successful business career with winemaking duties, but increasingly the latter has become his primary focus.



Biondelli Estate at Bornato



Biondelli vineyards and estate

The location in Bornato is considered to be within the most desirable part of the DOCG zone, cooler than the communes to the west, but avoiding the difficulties that can be found with ripening grapes in the area further east. Another great advantage is having the vineyards and winery on the same property, minimising the distance the grapes have to be moved – not usually the case in this DOCG, and an important factor in the outstanding wine quality they are able to achieve.



Biondelli Chardonnay budburst

Chardonnay, Pinot Nero (Pinot Noir), Pinot Bianco (Pinot Blanc) and the rare Erbamato (a late ripening variety high in acidity, making it perfect for sparklings) are the permitted varieties in the DOCG, but all Biondelli sparklings are only made from Chardonnay (for the Blanc de Blancs) and a small portion of Pinot Nero for their blend. Franciacorta Satèn follows the same maximum designation for dosage as Champagne, but Biondelli is very low for Brut at 2 g/l residual sugar, and likewise the pressure is low at 4 atmospheres, 6.5 being more usual. These factors contribute to the dry, delicate style Joska is looking to achieve. Biondelli generally pick a little earlier than most producers, too, and the 32 months on lees is unusually long for Satèn. Focused, linear and lean sparkling wines with complexity are the hallmarks of this estate.

THE WINES



NV Brut Satèn Franciacorta

Right from the outset, the Chardonnay influence in this wine is unmistakable and really dictates the style. Lemon curd jumps out straight away on the bouquet, with more minerally elements coming through strongly as well. Oyster shell notes are there, and the nutty, toasty lees-aged characters add a wonderful richness and complexity. The palate is lean and taut, with a savoury, almost saline edge and crunchy green apple flavour and acidity that really come through at the finish. The low dosage and pressure contribute to the fresh, buoyant feel, which suggests it will work as an aperitif style, but there is an underlying depth that seems to argue that it would be a great first course wine as well. Thinking about shellfish here with my mouth watering!